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QUESTIONS - CANNING AND OTHERS

NOV 1 1933
U. S. Department of Agriculture

A radio conversation between Mrs. Rowena Schmidt Carpenter, Bureau of Home Economics, and Mr. Wallace Kadderly, Office of Information, broadcast Thursday, September 1, 1938, in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, by the National Broadcasting Company and a network of 93 associate radio stations.

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WALLACE KADDERLY:

Today an old friend of the Farm and Home Hour is here, Rowena Schmidt Carpenter, from the Bureau of Home Economics. I am sure some of you will remember Mrs. Carpenter from the days when she chatted with you each week. Or maybe more recently than that you've had a letter from her answering some questions you wrote to the Bureau about vitamins or meal planning. Mrs. Carpenter answers many of the letter about nutrition, and sees every question that comes in about cooking, or canning, or anything else that has to do with food. It's a wonder to me that she isn't hungry all the time.

ROWENA SCHMIDT CARPENTER:

Maybe I am!

KADDERLY:

But, you don't look it.

CARPENTER:

Now was that NICE ?

KADDERLY:

I meant it to be nice ! After all, you wrote a little pamphlet called "Consider your weight", didn't you? Far be it from me to infer that you don't practice what you preach.

CARPENTER:

Oh! Skip it! You told me I was to answer some questions that have come in the mail lately -- questions about food values, canning- - -

KADDERLY:

You're right. Canning. Eat all you can -- and what you can't, can. To can or not to can, that's the question.

CARPENTER:

To can AND HOW to can, THAT is the big question. Take corn, for instance - - -

KADDERLY:

Corn? You bet I'll take some. Corn on the cob.

CARPENTER:

Glad you didn't say "cob on the corn", like a little boy I know! But let's get down to brass tacks, or better still, to pressure cookers. That's what you need for canning corn, you know.

KADDERLY:

Pressure cooker? But suppose we don't have a pressure cooker?

CARPENTER:

All right, then you don't CAN CORN. You might can tomatoes or peaches ...

KADDERLY:

But we have corn, and we want some in cans for next winter so I guess we'll have to buy, beg, or steal a pressure cooker. WHY?

CARPENTER:

WHY? That reminds me of home too. Well, because you don't want an attack of botulinus poisoning, do you?

KADDERLY:

No, I do not !

CARPENTER:

Well, then you have to be sure that your canner is much hotter than the temperature of boiling water, hot enough to kill the pesky little spores of the botulinus bacteria that may be in some of the foods we can. And that means a pressure cooker, with its high temperature, for corn, beans, peas, meat - - -

KADDERLY:

The temperature in a pressure cooker goes higher as the pressure is greater, doesn't it?

CARPENTER:

Exactly. 5 pounds pressure, 228° Fahrenheit; 10 pounds pressure, 240° Fahrenheit; 15 pounds pressure - - -

KADDERLY:

Hold on. Where does the corn come in? What pressure for it?

CARPENTER:

The answer is right here, on page 28 of the home-canning bulletin, but you need more facts than the amount of pressure to can corn, so you'd better take this bulletin home and give it to Mrs. Kadderly.

KADDERLY:

You bet I will. "Home canning of fruits, vegetables, and meats", all for nothing.

CARPENTER:

For nothing? Better not let Mrs. Kadderly hear you say that. Home canning isn't for NOTHING. You wouldn't think so if you had to do the work -- You wouldn't think so either if you counted up how much you'd save on the winter grocery bill by putting up the surplus from your summer garden.

KADDERLY:

You know what I meant when I said "for nothing". I meant the home canning bulletin is free, all 37 pages of it. Farmers' Bulletin 1762, free for the asking, and plenty of fall fruits and vegetables still to be canned, not to mention meats

CARPENTER:

Speaking of meats. That reminds me of a question I've had to answer exactly four times in the last few weeks. "How old must children be before they have meat, and when in their young lives do they get both meat and egg every day?"

KADDERLY:

Do you know the answer to that one, in a nutshell?

CARPENTER:

No, yes, no, oh! your question was no good. I do know the answer to my question, but NOT in a nutshell.

KADDERLY:

All right, I'll give you an eggshell then.

CARPENTER:

You would! Well, we'll have to start with an egg, then, instead of meat. By the time a child is a year old he is getting a whole egg every day.

KADDERLY:

Must every child have an egg every day?

CARPENTER:

Well, eggs are remarkably good food; the yolk is rich in iron to make good red blood. That's the reason egg yolk is given to babies so early in life. And when the baby gets the iron, he gets calcium, and phosphorus, and a couple of vitamins, A and D, and some very fine protein thrown in for good measure.

KADDERLY:

I'm convinced. If the family can afford to, the young children each get an egg a day, and if not, they get as many eggs during the week as the food budget allows.

CARPENTER:

Right! The children get the breaks when it comes to eggs.

KADDERLY:

What about the meat? You're still trying to give that child his quota of egg and meat for a day!

CARPENTER:

Oh! Yes, but now, I've forgotten how old the child is . . .

KADDERLY:

One year old; you've only gotten him into the beginning of his second year

CARPENTER:

Well, then, let's give him some meat, small servings of tender meat at least three times a week. And if we stay here until he is 18 months old, we'll let him have meat or fish every day, and an egg every day.

KADDERLY:

But we can't stay here six months, and I can't remember that long. Haven't you a bulletin "all for nothing?"

CARPENTER:

Free of charge, Mr. Kadderly. Yes, a bulletin that will help you remember. "Food for children." And I'm glad you mentioned bulletins, because you might go away thinking that young children, or older ones for that matter, get nothing but an egg and some meat every day if their parents follow my advice.

KADDERLY:

Oh, no I wouldn't. I've seen that bulletin and I know, better than you think, the gospel of milk, leafy, green, and yellow vegetables, and all the rest. I also know that there's a whole bulletin on milk alone.

CARPENTER:

Not milk alone. Milk for the family.

KADDERLY:

Well, it's all right to drink milk alone isn't it, if you're away from your family?

CARPENTER:

Of course. I don't care where or in what company you get your milk. You don't even have to drink it if you'd rather chew it as cheese, or sip it in your cream soup. But get it somehow, if you want your teeth to stay by you.

KADDERLY:

Cheating the dentist, are you? Well, that suits me. I'd rather sit at a counter drinking milk any day than sit in a dentist's chair. Is that all there is to the milk story?

CARPENTER:

No, but that's all I'm going to tell you now. You can add the milk bulletin to your library. It took much longer than the minute we have left to write everything that bulletin says.

KADDERLY:

Anything about vitamins in the bulletin on milk?

CARPENTER:

Plenty. Four pages full.

KADDERLY:

Have to get it then. I need my vitamins, and if I'm getting some of them in milk I might as well know it. Do vitamins help me keep my teeth?

CARPENTER:

Oh, my yes. Didn't you ever see a guinea pig that hadn't had enough vitamin C, and his teeth were loose and his gums all sore?

KADDERLY:

No, I haven't, but what's a guinea pig to do with me?

CARPENTER:

A great deal, I should think, if he lets us find out something that will keep you from getting in the fix that a poor diet put him.

KADDERLY:

All right, you win. Have you got a bulletin about the guinea pig too?

CARPENTER:

No, I haven't. But there's no reason for you to worry about animals on experimental diets. All you have to do is to read the suggestions for a balanced diet, based on what we have learned in the laboratory, and forget how we learned it.

KADDERLY:

That's better. I'd hate to have guinea pigs and white rats mixed up with my meals, even on paper. Well, I'll have to get that bulletin on balanced diets too.

CARPENTER:

Well, you already have one; I mean the bulletin "Food for children", and there's another one, "Diets to fit the family income." They'll give you plenty of information about food values and food selection. Haven't you gotten enough "for nothing", today?

KADDERLY:

I'll say I have. Four bulletins. Glad you came, Mrs. Carpenter. And now I'll repeat the names of those bulletins and tell you how to get them:

Farmers' Bulletin 1762 - Home Canning of Fruits, Vegetables and Meats
Farmers' Bulletin 1674 - Food for Children
Farmers' Bulletin 1757 - Diets to Fit the Family Income
Farmers' Bulletin 1705 - Milk for the Family

Requests should be sent to Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A., Washington, D. C.

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